Perks under Desh-Videsh scheme of Indian airlines

1684. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether schemes like Desh-Videsh offer of Indian Airlines involve any perk when the travel is at Government's expense;

(b) whether such schemes lead to increased/avoidable travels at Government's expense; and

(c) if so, in what manner Government propose to regulate this perk?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) The Government Officers performing public duties cannot be treated differently from other passengers. This, however, does not involve any perk as this is an incentive given by the airlines to increase their market demand and profitability. Every tour by Government officers is sanctioned only when it is absolutely necessary and no anfractuous expenditure on tours is being incurred by the Government of India.

Outstanding Taxes

1685. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether outstanding amount of unrecovered taxes has been increasing continuously during the last few years;

(b) the outstanding amount of account of Income Tax, Corporate Tax, Customs Duty and Central Excise Duty as on 31st March of 1999, 2000 and 2001; and

(c) the plan of action of Government to liquidate the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) The amount of Income Tax, Corporation Tax and Central Excise Duty outstanding as on 31.3.1999, 31.3.2000 and 31.3.2001 are Rs. 52049 crore, Rs. 61192 crore and Rs. 64784 crore respectively. Information in respect

of Customs Duty Outstanding is being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Recovery of tax is a continuous process, involving the use of statutory provisions which include charging of interest, levy of penalty, and attachment and sale of movable and immovable properties. In respect of cases where stay orders against recovery have been passed by the appellate bodies, special measures are taken to file petitions for urgent hearing or for deciding the cases on priority. Periodical review and monitoring of cases involving high demands are also regularly undertaken at various levels and necessary instructions are issued from time to time for effecting recovery of the outstanding taxes.

Flouting of Rules by MNCs

1686. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that some Multi-National Companies are flouting rules of excise and customs;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is investigating customs exemption issue on life saving drugs; and

(c) the number of Indian Pharmaceutical Companies against whom cases of crores of rupees as excise and customs duties are pending?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.